

# FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENT

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The Burnaby Board of Education (the Board) believes that the Burnaby School District is best able to meet the educational needs of the community when it is guided by the shared values, beliefs and goals which enable the district to focus on providing direction and guidance to the district's development and operation.

## 1. OUR MISSION

The mission of the Burnaby Board of Education is to prepare and support an inclusive, caring community of learners for the challenges of a changing tomorrow.

## 2. OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE AND GOAL

The primary purpose of the Burnaby Board of Education is to ensure that the public education system in Burnaby helps learners to develop their potential to the greatest extent possible, develop their literacy and numeracy skills and meet their educational needs in an equitable, accountable manner as mandated under the School Act. Consequently, the primary goal of the Burnaby Board of Education is enhanced student learning and achievement so our learners:

- are able to learn and apply what they know;
- can take increasing responsibility for the physical, cultural, emotional, social, intellectual and career aspects of their lives, and challenge themselves to be the best that they can be;
- behave ethically and act in a socially-responsible manner in all aspects of daily life; and
- become life-long learners and educated, active and responsible citizens in our democratic society.

## 3. OUR VALUES AND BELIEFS

The decisions of the Burnaby Board of Education are guided by the following common beliefs:

- ***We believe that our learners are important***  
Our learners are important, valuable members of our community and key to the future success of our society. Therefore, the Board's decisions are guided by what best serves our learners' needs.
- ***We believe that education is a life-long process***  
Learning, growing, developing and improving is a lifelong process. Therefore, the Board's decisions are guided by how best to establish foundations that help students develop the desire and the processes required to be life-long learners.

- ***We believe in the value and importance of public education***  
 Public education is a basic human right which is essential to the development of individual potential. It represents the fundamental way in which our society provides all learners with equitable opportunities for their future. In order to take full advantage of the opportunities provided, everyone involved - learners, parents, staff and other community members – need to place a high value on education, view public schools as important places and protect the right of every student to benefit from what the public education system has to offer. Therefore, the Board’s decisions are guided by the desire to ensure open, equitable access to public education by all of the learners in our community.
- ***We believe that public education should be free from religious, racial and sexual biases***  
 We live in a complex, multicultural and rapidly-changing society. Therefore, the public education system must accommodate the diverse needs of learners while providing a safe, caring and welcoming environment in which to live and learn. Therefore, the Board’s decisions are guided by the need to make our public schools safe, welcoming and accommodating environments in which to learn and work.
- ***We believe in the equity of opportunity***  
 All learners should have the equal right and equitable access to a wide variety of educational opportunities that can assist them to develop their potential as individuals and as members of society. Therefore, the Board’s practices and decisions are guided by the need to find ways of ensuring that all learners have access to as many educational opportunities as possible.
- ***We believe in ethical behaviour***  
 While the individual is clearly important, the continuing success of our society depends on individuals being guided by values and principles of ethical behaviour and acting in a responsible, respectful, cooperative manner at all times. Therefore, the Board’s decisions are guided by our values and principles and our belief that everyone must work together to ensure that Burnaby schools are safe places to learn and work.
- ***We believe in the importance of cooperation, communication, collaboration and partnership***  
 The key to enhancing educational opportunities is for all concerned: learners, parents, staff, the community and the Board, to work cooperatively, communicate openly, engage collaboratively and work in partnership in order to meet the educational needs of our learners; to make the best possible use of the available resources and to assist the public education system in Burnaby to be the best that it can be. Therefore, the Board’s decisions are governed by a desire to communicate openly and work collaboratively with the community for the betterment of the Burnaby school district.
- ***We believe in accountability***  
 Public education is a partnership. The Board believes that the continuing success of the public education system requires that there be trust and mutual accountability. Therefore, the Board’s decisions are guided by the desire to be accountable to the public.

To achieve its mission and commitment to learning, the Burnaby Board of Education will:

- develop a Three-year Strategic Plan based on its priorities and initiatives which is subject to annual review and revision;
- approve a District Achievement Contract which identifies the specific goals for improving student achievement on an annual basis; and
- stand accountable for its actions on behalf of its community.

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Date Adopted: 2007-11-27  
Date(s) Revised:

Cross References:

# TRUSTEE CODE OF ETHICS

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The Board of Education of the Burnaby School District, comprised of elected members of the community, is fundamental to the effectiveness of the public education system for the Burnaby community. In accordance with the School Act, the Board's duty is to govern the district and schools in accordance with specified powers in a fiscally responsible and cost-effective manner. In order to fulfill the Board's responsibilities in an ethical and business-like manner, a Trustee Code of Ethics is considered critical for:

- abiding by the School Act, the Oath of Allegiance and the Oath of Office;
- guiding trustee behavior in their interactions as a member of the Board, and with members of the community;
- determining how trustees undertake their role and the expectations required of them,
- advocating for learners in the community; and
- instilling the community's trust in the public education system.

Therefore, the following is the Trustee Code of Ethics for the Burnaby Board of Education:

## 1. **Confidentiality**

Trustees will deal appropriately with sensitive issues and maintain the confidentiality of discussions that take place during in-camera sessions.

## 2. **Decision Making**

Trustees will base decisions upon all available facts in each situation and vote their honest and unbiased conviction in every case, recognizing that their primary duty is to represent the district in the best interests of learners and the Burnaby community. Trustees will respect and abide by the majority decisions made by the Board.

## 3. **Ethical and Respectful Behavior**

Trustees will maintain the highest standards of civility and respect accorded to public office and refrain from unwarranted criticism of fellow Board members, or district employees. Trustees will work with their fellow board members in a spirit of harmony and co-operation.

## 4. **Legal Authority**

As individuals, Trustees will have no Board authority outside the meetings of the Board unless the Board has so delegated.

**5. Integrity**

Trustees will do everything possible to maintain the integrity, confidence and dignity of the office of School Trustee and will not use their position for personal advantage or for the advantage of friends and/or family.

**6. Inclusivity**

Trustees will welcome and encourage active participation by community residents, organizations, learners, parents and staff in the district in order to develop and support the best programs which meet the educational needs of all learners.

**7. Responsibility**

Each trustee will devote time, thought and study of the issues in order to provide effective decision making.

**8. Duty of Board**

The primary function of the Board is to establish the policies by which the school district is administered. The day-to-day administration of the educational program and conduct of the school operation is the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools and district staff.

**9. Financial Stewardship**

Trustees acknowledge that the expenditure of funds is a community trust and will endeavor to see that funds are expended efficiently, economically and in the best interest of the learners. Trustees shall carry out this function in an open and collaborative manner.

**10. Conflict of Interest**

Whenever a decision is required on any matter, Trustees are to declare any conflict of interest and will not participate in, vote on, or exert influence on, the decision in which the trustee has a conflict of interest.

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Date Adopted: 2008-09  
Date(s) Revised:

Cross References: